

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballyfarnon - Béal Átha Fearnáin** Ref: **291**
County: **Roscommon** Mark: **330**
Category: **B** Date(s): **29/07/2022**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	44	45
Streetscape & Public Places	80	44	46
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	43	45
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	35	38
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	22	23
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	65	65
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	30	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	36	37
TOTAL MARK	550	319	330

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2022. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo.

Thank you for your entry form, the photographs provided, the map and your long term plan. This plan is well structured and you have considered actions for all eight of the adjudication categories of this competition - excellent. You have great support across the community and well done to your volunteers. They have travelled to attend training courses and conferences and also attended zoom training programmes throughout the winter. It is not easy to sustain a community group so your effort in co-ordination is noted. Thanks to the time and effort put into not just your work over the last 12 months, but in collating your entry form so nicely.

We appreciate it is hard to keep volunteers – one way may be to have a suggestion box, or an on-line survey and gather names from this (subject to GDPR of course) to help people interested in your work. We suspect there are new residents in the village so they may be enticed to help – especially if there is a slice of cake for volunteers at the end of an activity!

A big shout out to the local school who have helped in many ways – seed planting, nature walks, wildlife activities and even litter picking.

You are to be applauded for the way in which you communicate with your community – you use a variety of ways to ensure everyone is contacted and gets an opportunity to be involved.

And after 53 years in this competition you are rounded applauded as you are progressive and taken the community through the decades as the policies and focus has changed. Well done on your sustained hard work.

Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

The Main Street of Ballyfarnon was presented to a very high standard

The colour scheme at Lynn's was lovely and we liked the wooden security gate that they removed upon opening. The mural above Killoran's shop highlighted the stunning local scenery. The façade of Shivnan's was very nicely painted. Although sadly closed at 9am, the garden of the Horseshoe Bar looked very attractive as we peeped over the wall. And the collection of US number plates looked great at Healy's garage - one of the tidiest garages we have seen in Ireland!

Whilst other premises were now closed, we loved the presentation of some including the Old Post Office, and The Courthouse. The sympathetic presentation of the weigh bridge and internal weigh scales still visible in this side building were of note. They looked great – the before and after pictures provided showed what an impact your volunteers made to ensure it is well kept (eg ensuring the gutters get cleaned otherwise water would get into the building). Have you any long-term plans for the Courthouse? Maybe the community could provide some ideas? We read that you are awaiting an answer from Roscommon County Council on the feasibility for this premises. Maybe a Hostel for passing walkers and cyclists?

Next year perhaps you could focus your attention on the street pumps which could do with some enhancement and possibly the pump in the Main Street could have a push button rather than turn tap on it. This should reduce any water wastage.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasá agus Tírdhreachú:

You have thoroughly embraced the All-Ireland Pollination Plan and your work for this category of the competition has been excellent. The GAA, the school, the playschool, every home has taken an action here. And the school pupils even traveled north of the County to learn more about farming and biodiversity.

Colourful, self-watering planters were full of wildlife-friendly flowers and the notices and management of the area around St Ronan's GAA is to be applauded. Nicely managed flower beds were noted at strategic corners such as outside Alderford Interiors.

The soft landscaping outside the Court House has helped create an important focal point in the centre of Ballyfarnon. Limestone sculptures, flags and seating all looked well. We loved the planters and silver birch trees here.

Window boxes were provided for nearly every premises. In one empty building there was a nice display of wildlife pictures drawn by local schoolchildren. Other empty buildings had planters or window boxes to provide continuity and brighten the premises.

A large tree at the entrance to the memorial garden appears to have died and should be removed please.

Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:

As mentioned, you have made great strides in biodiversity. Information boards provided information on plants and animals of Ballyfarnon and the River Foorish. The Riverside walk was lovely to explore and whilst we didn't see any kingfishers, we did see many lovely birds. We guessed you probably have lots of bats here at night and maybe a guided bat walk on a summer's evening might be of interest to the community? Or the purchase of a bat detector for community use?

You have considered habitats and where you can enhance them appropriately. Fruit trees are to be planted, gaps in hedges are to be filled and parge community spaces, such as the GAA pitch, is being managed for sports and wildlife.

Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:

This category of the competition is about considering how we use things and how we can reduce environmental impacts in our everyday actions. Your submission had many different examples of actions that Ballyfarnon TidyTowns have progressed relevant to this category. This included making planters from recycled timber, creating mulch from leaves collected on the street and clothes recycling. Does the GAA or the school organize uniform or kit swaps?

We saw the new bus stop signs for the local bus – this should help reduce carbon emissions. Perhaps you can advertise the times/costs?

During adjudication the proposal to create the fruit orchard at the allotments was still to commence – maybe some of the new residents would be interested in working on this?

Finally well done in the natural actions to reduce waste that you listed such as the fact shop vegetables at end of shelf life go to donkeys and ponies in the village. Waste not – want not!

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We loved the postcards that you made showing the work of the school children! This is wonderful. We hope they got posted all over. Thanks to them and all your litter volunteers for their hard work. You have instilled a strong ethos and pride. For example, during adjudication we were impressed to see a lady drive past in a small white car who subsequently pulled over to pick up some litter observed in the car park by the Chapel.

The defibrillator outside the GAA clubhouse did not have an obvious access code on it, could this be added please? The discretely positioned litter bin at the Memorial Garden was noticed and was in use so well done on this location.

Could the missing wooden slat be replaced on the bench outside the old post office? Lettering on some name

stones was fading (e.g. Kilronan Park).

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

Every home was nicely presented in the village, for example the stone-fronted cottage next door to Alderford Interiors. As mentioned, we loved the array of window boxes on all the homes and many were observed tending to these. One home near the top of the Mountain Road had a lovely display of agriculture equipment and a recycled bike that looked well. We also would like to commend the homeowner at the river who has nicely managed the entrance to the Riverwalk.

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

Two separate name signs were noticed on both the main approach roads – are they both necessary? The black and white ones were lovely. Another style of bilingual name signs was noticed on the Mountain Road approach into the village which looked well. This was nicely underplanted.

Verges on approach roads were nicely managed with a narrow strip mown to indicate they are being managed. Discreetly positioned, Glasclad steel looked well.

Arriving from Sligo, white metal safety barrier directs you over the bridge and we wonder whether some artwork could be attached here such as a bottle top mural?

Road surfacing in front of the Chapel and approach road looked well.

Concluding Remarks:

For 53 years Ballyfarnon has entered this competition. You are all warmly applauded for your work. The village looked wonderful, and we were very impressed that so many are involved. Signage at the GAA is a great example of how everyone is on board with your work. Thank you for your submission and work this last 12 months.